equivalent to F and G grades of non-coking coal on the basis of Useful Heat Value (UHV). How ever, calorific value of lignite in Gujarat is equivalent to E grade of non-coking coal on the basis of UHV.

(d) Yes sir.

(e) and (f) Section 9(3) of the Mines and minerals (Regulation and Development) Act, 1957 provides that the Central Govt. shall not enhance the rate of royalty in respect of any mineral more than once during any period of three years. There is no compulsion, therefore, for the Central Government to revise the royalty rates on lignite periodically. A revision of royalty rates on a basic input such as lignite can push up the final cost of the finished product and the Central Government has been deliberating on the pros and cons of a revision and ways and means to go about it. No fixed time frame can be given for a revision of royalty.

Decrease in Coal Mining

1454. SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT: Will the Minister of MINES AND MINERALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the collieries are decreasing the mining of coal;

(b) the extent to which they have decreased the mining and the reasons therefor;

(c) the quantum it will reduce and whether it will affect the supply to railways and power projects; and

(d) the extent to which it will adversely affect the functioning of Railways as well as reduce power generation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES AND MINERALS DR. (SHRIMATI): RITA VERMA: (a) and (b) There has been positive growth in coal production in last five years except for the year 1998-99. In 1998-99, coal companies regulated their production due to sluggish demand and low offtake

by the consumers. The production in 1998-99 was 292.27 million tonnes against a target of 306.50 million tonnes.

(c) and (d) Coal requirements of all consumers including power and railways would be met and the performance of Railways and Power Sectors is not expected to be affected by regulation of production, if any.

Memorandum by Singareni Colliery Workers

1455. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of MINES AND MINERALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Singareni Collieries Company Ltd. Staff Union has submitted a memorandum urging opening of 16 new Coal mines and allow certain exemptions to the SCCL from the new coal policy;

(b) if so, the problems being faced by the workers; and

(c) the reasons for not resolving the coal mine workers Sixth Wage Board agreement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES AND MINERALS [DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA]: (a) and (b)Yes, Sir. The workers have submitted memorandum relating to clearance of pending projects. Early finalisation of National Coal Wage Agreement (NCWA)-VI and new coal policy.

(c) Joint Bi-partite Committee for the Coal Industry (JBCCI)—VI was constituted on 3.4.1997 to negotiate and finalise the National Coal Wage Agreement-VI. However, the package on pay/wage revision offered by the managements of coal companies has not been accepted by the workers Unions. Besides this, the Unions have not accepted the periodicity of 10 years for future wage revision as prescribed by the Department of Public Enterprises. The negotiations are still going on in JBCCI to finalise the wage agreement (NCWA-VI). Pending finalisation of NCWA-VI, interim relief @ 12% of basic+Fixed Dearness Allowance (FDA) as on 30.6.1996 has already been paid to the workers.